

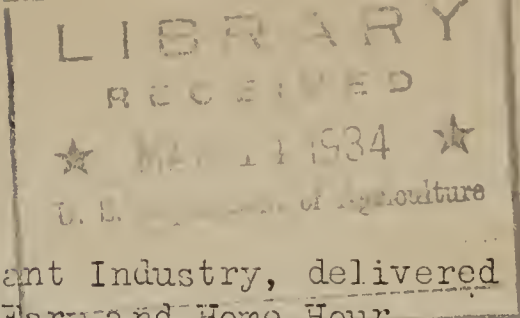
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## THE GARDEN CALENDAR



A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC radio stations, Monday, December 18, 1933.

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Hello folks. First I want to tell you how glad I am to be back with you today after three or four weeks absence from the Farm and Home Hour programs. Well I had a birthday yesterday and I was sort of hoping that nobody would remember it, but they did. You see these birthday anniversaries are beginning to remind me that I am getting along in years, and goodness knows I don't want to grow old, not for a long time yet. The older I become, however, the more I am impressed with the thought that a lot of us farmers are not living up to our opportunities. I mean opportunities for a fuller and better home life on the farm. I appreciate the fact that there are still thousands of farm homes in which there are very few "modern conveniences" but with the radio, the telephone, the automobile and improved roads, life on the farm is much more attractive than it was when I was a tow-headed little rascal who refused to eat his spinach and carrots.

A few weeks ago we had a conference here in Washington of the Home Demonstration leaders of the 13 southern States that produce the big cotton crop that we have been trying to reduce. The Home Agents told us about the millions of quarts of fruits and vegetables that were grown and canned for home use on southern farms last summer, and the thousands of dozens of eggs that the farm biddies had laid, and the milk, butter, cheese and all of the good things that had been put away for the winter. But, that was not the whole story for there were some startling figures given, - figures that showed how many thousands of farms there are on which there is no garden or orchard and where neither cow or chickens are kept. After hearing these reports I came to the conclusion that we are far from 100 percent perfect in this matter of our live-at-home program, and that if we are to enjoy life on the farm to the fullest we must pay more attention to our gardens and orchards and the other essentials of a good living.

Very soon we will turn the calendar over and start a new year and with the coming of 1934 let us resolve that we are going to pay more attention to the production of supplies for home use. In the plans for adjusting production of the basic crops, there is not the slightest objection to your using a small part of the land taken out of major crops for the enlargement of your fruit and vegetable garden, provided, and here is the point to bear in mind, that the fruits and vegetables are for home use and for the improvement of the family diet. In many cases the garden plot is now too small to produce all of the vegetables that are really needed by the farm family. In many cases the same spot of ground has been used for a garden for the past fifty or sixty years and the soil is filled with weed seeds and plant diseases. In other cases shade trees that are growing near the garden have sent their feeding rootlets all through the garden and are robbing the soil of the plant food and moisture needed by the garden crops. There may be any of a dozen reasons why it will pay to select a new piece of ground for a garden, and now, while we are making adjustments is the time to make changes. But of  
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course if a new plot goes into garden, the old plot can't be put into crops for sale.

The new garden will require fencing, the land may have to be cleaned and fertilized. You may have a piece of new ground that is especially suited for a home garden. You may wish to go still farther and plant some of the perennial or permanent crops such as asparagus and rhubarb, for home use or you may find it advisable to plant small fruits and a home orchard.

The first and most important thing to consider in the selection of a new garden plot is the character of the soil. Is it well drained; does it hold moisture during dry periods; can it be worked early in the spring; what is the character of the subsoil, is it a hardpan that holds water or is it too porous so that the fertility will leach away? Is the location low and subject to frost damage and flooding? Does the land lie in such shape that it will not wash during heavy rains? Is the location protected from the sweep of the winds? That's a lot of things to think about but every one is important. You southern folks may have to plant your garden crops on raised beds or ridges for better drainage, and those of you who live in the Great Plains section have just the opposite condition for you want to catch and hold every drop of moisture that you can get.

In my garden calendar talks of the next few weeks I am going to discuss with you the best methods whereby you can grow more and better fruits and vegetables for home consumption. What I'm advocating is that you set about to produce the things that you need for your own living. I believe that we are coming out all right but I do believe that we will do the job a lot quicker if we produce at least 65 percent and maybe 75 percent of our living right on our farms. We have the land and the tools and about all we need is to make our plan, - get a small supply of seeds and plants, - and then when the weather permits, go ahead, and plant your garden. I'll be with you helping in every way I can.